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Reynolds Foundation awards UT Southwestern grant to strengthen physicians' training in geriatric medicine

DALLAS – Nov. 10, 2008 – A grant for nearly \$2 million from the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation to UT Southwestern Medical Center will allow educators to expand geriatric training in the medical school curriculum.

Designated as the Southwestern Aging and Geriatrics Education (SAGE) program, it will improve the geriatric knowledge, skills and attitudes of physician trainees, as well as enhance the ability of the faculty to teach geriatrics. The SAGE curriculum focuses on patient safety and patient-centered care of the vulnerable elder. The program will affect every medical student; all internal medicine, family medicine and psychiatry residents; and many surgical specialty and subspecialty trainees at UT Southwestern.

“When the baby-boom generation hits its peak in 2030, the number of people over age 65 in the U.S. will soar to 71.5 million – double the number of seniors in 2000,” said Dr. Craig Rubin, chief of geriatrics, director of the Mildred Wyatt and Ivor P. Wold Center for Geriatric Care and principal investigator of SAGE.

“It is imperative that today’s medical students and residents receive adequate training in geriatrics so they are prepared to meet the extraordinary challenges that will face our health care system,” added Dr. Rubin.

The grant, co-directed by Dr. Lynne Kirk, associate dean for undergraduate medical education, and Dr. Amit Shah, assistant professor of internal medicine, will make it possible for geriatrics content to be integrated into all four years of the medical student curriculum.

It will also support the creation of an online patient safety curriculum that will be used by surgical subspecialty and internal medicine residents, a new monthlong rotation in geriatrics for all psychiatry residents, and expanded training for family medicine and internal medicine residents in the care of the frail older adult.

As part of the grant, UT Southwestern will collaborate with the University of Arizona and
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the University of Chicago – institutions that received prior Reynolds Foundation support. Their initiatives were designated as the Reynolds Comprehensive Programs to Strengthen Physicians' Training in Geriatrics.

The Donald W. Reynolds Foundation is a national philanthropic organization founded in 1954 by the late media entrepreneur for whom it is named. Headquartered in Las Vegas, it is one of the largest private foundations in the U.S.

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